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# Spoon and Punk

issue number nine

50 cents - \$1.00

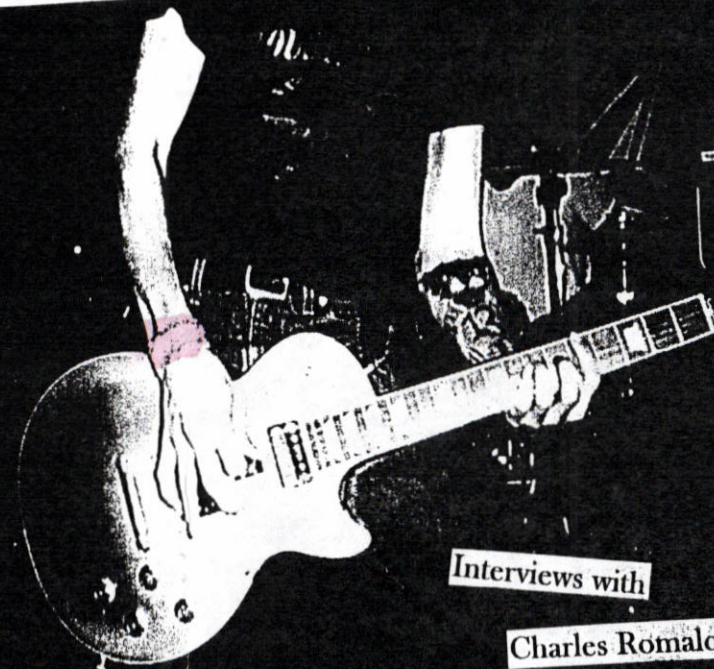
Bridge to the Future

by Justin Zaruba

A Soundtrack For

by Dan Davis

Bunter Who Spits Paint



Interviews with

Charles Romalotti

Les from And Academy



# Spoon and Punk

issue number nine

50 cents - \$1.00

Welcome to another issue of spoon and punk, furthering my financial problems. This will be short, as I am tired and out of words. I've finally decided to start charging for the zine. At this moment I'm not sure what but most likely it will only be 50 cents. I know, it sucks, but losing massive amounts of money every time I print an issue is not something I can afford right now. We'll see what happens in the future though.

Thanks to everyone who has helped me out with the zine thus far, especially those who have written for me, submitted photographs, donated money, and been there for me when I just had to ramble.

I guess that's all. Write me if you want to trade zines, share something you've written, submit photographs, help me in any other way or just talk. I'm not mean. I don't bite.



Alexandra Unruh

Spoon and Punk

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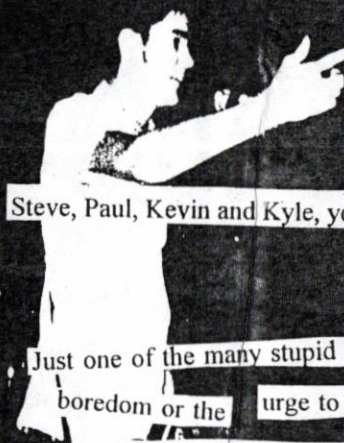
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Stop saying you started it all or brought it back to life.

Just because you weren't around to witness it doesn't mean it wasn't happening. Just because you think someone has a bad attitude and is taking credit where it isn't due doesn't mean it's true. I don't care what silly fights people have, I don't care if you think someone looked at you wrong. The whole point of being here is to make something real, to feed it and become it and believe in it, but if it's just going to be a popularity contest I don't want to be a part of it. Talking shit only takes a person so far in life, usually to their knees.



Steve, Paul, Kevin and Kyle, you've been real to me and I value that.

Just one of the many stupid battles kids decide to wage out boredom or the urge to destroy, against a band that has worked so hard to build up what we now take for granted.



Sometimes **I** worry that I am the cause of all the problems in my life. Then I look at the facts and realize it's true.

They told me to snap myself with a rubber band when I had the urge to slice myself open again, so I did. They taught me to be creative about my injuries. Make it look like a nervous habit, an injury. I had a shaving accident or I crashed into the door. I don't crave the scars anymore. I don't bleed the pain out of my system. Now I want the bruises, but you won't see. I'm a professional at covering things up. If I don't want you to know, you won't, but then how am I supposed to get the help and care I need? I've learned how to deal with things on my own to some extent. I don't cry to anyone very often. I only trust one person in the world enough to open up to, and around him I am a walking catastrophe some days. Around everyone else I am happy but careful. They think I'm on drugs, but what does it matter? At least that's a somewhat acceptable flaw.



## Mumia Abu-Jamal's Death Sentence Overturned. Finally!

A federal judge threw out Mumia Abu-Jamal's death sentence in court on Tuesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2001. The judge ruled that Mumia, 49 years old, a former Black Panther and journalist is entitled to a new sentencing hearing for supposedly killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner on December 9<sup>th</sup>

1981. Mumia had been sentenced to die by lethal injection on December 2<sup>nd</sup> under a second death warrant that had been signed in October by Tom Ridge, former Pennsylvania Governor and now working for "president" Bush. Once

again, the execution was stayed, waiting for the outcome of Mumia's latest appeal. The judge who made the decision to grant Mumia a new sentencing, William Yohn, said that instructions to jurors in making their decision were misleading, stating that jurors were told that they must agree unanimously in order to consider a sentence of life, instead of the execution.

Recently the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Faulkner's death was remembered, and several groups held protests against Mumia's imprisonment, while Faulkner's

wife continued to call for his death. Those who oppose the death sentence are very grateful that Yohn threw it out, stating that they believe evidence proving his innocence was withheld from the court, Mumia Abu-Jamal's confession was fabricated, and the trial judge was biased.

Yohn has given the state 180 days to hold a sentencing hearing, and says if the state does not act on this, he will sentence Mumia to life in prison. Although this is a victory for Mumia and all those that support him, many are not satisfied with this, and say that they will continue to fight until Mumia is set free at last and his innocence is declared by the courts.



Sometimes

homesick

the

just

I get this horrible feeling that something isn't right. I feel  
for no reason or lost or confused, without reason. Those are  
times I worry the most about myself, the times I know I should  
stay by people I care about and try to distract myself from the way  
I feel, because it is at those times that I know I could do something  
to seriously hurt myself without ever giving it a second thought.  
There's nothing to worry about though, because that sadness is  
not an everyday type of thing, and since there is no reason for  
it other than what I have recently found, I can expect and  
control it to some extent.

Not too long ago, I stumbled upon a zine  
that dealt with the

ways of  
the moon, or

rather the moon's  
strong urge to be

recognized and worshipped,

and it's anger at those who chose to ignore it. Funny, really, but I had never before thought  
of the moon like that, but once I did things made a little more sense. Okay, the moon

controls the tides, right? And the majority of our human bodies are made up of water,

correct? So wouldn't it make sense that the moon could control us to some extent? It makes

sense to me, anyway. Realizing this, I thought maybe that horrible feeling that something

isn't right that I got every once in a while did have an explanation. So I looked at a

calendar and what did I find? Every time I got that feeling it was a day or two before or

after the full moon, and sometimes the day of. Curious, really. So why should you care

about this? I don't know. I don't care if you care. It just makes me feel better to know that

my unreasonably suicidal days are just an effect the moon cycle has on me and it's

really no reason to get upset or do anything drastic. Ah, to discover oneself and how it all works

is a wonderful feeling, even if it's not entirely accurate.

SOLVITUR

AMBULANDO

r.i.p. all those whose songs are canon to us, forever.

the khayembii communique

nymb

embrace

gorilla biscuits

far

minor threat

killsadie

sweep the leg johnny

jawbox

jawbreaker

crimpshrine

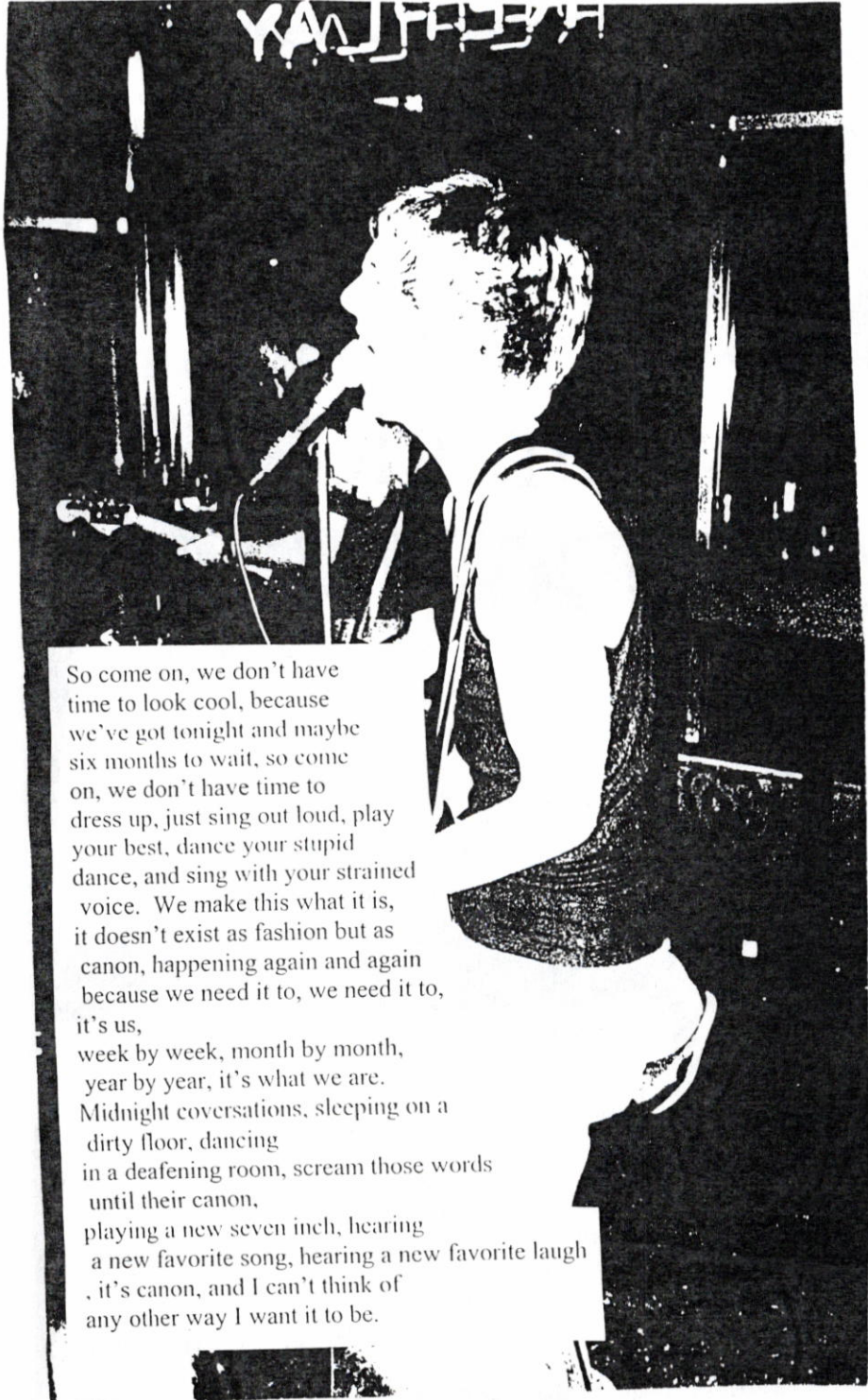
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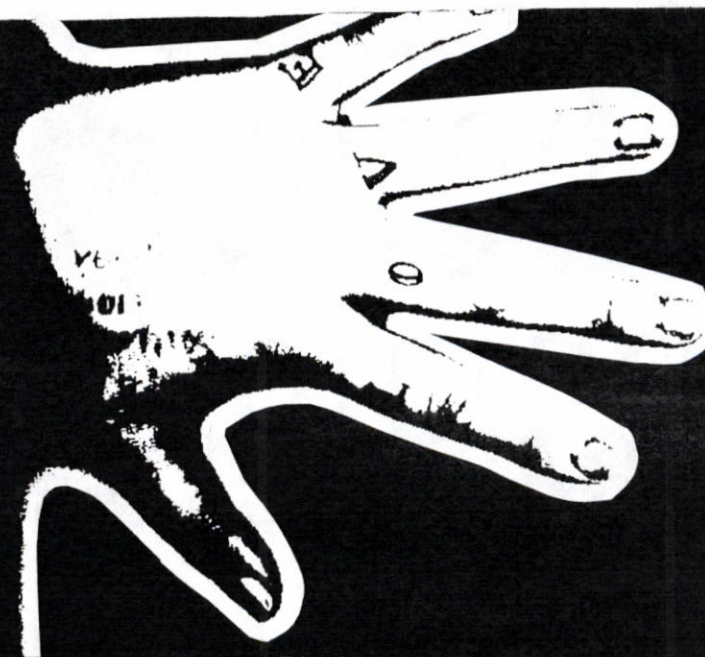
dan davis words/photos



YAN J FLEAH



So come on, we don't have time to look cool, because we've got tonight and maybe six months to wait, so come on, we don't have time to dress up, just sing out loud, play your best, dance your stupid dance, and sing with your strained voice. We make this what it is, it doesn't exist as fashion but as canon, happening again and again because we need it to, we need it to, it's us, week by week, month by month, year by year, it's what we are. Midnight conversations, sleeping on a dirty floor, dancing in a deafening room, scream those words until their canon, playing a new seven inch, hearing a new favorite song, hearing a new favorite laugh, it's canon, and I can't think of any other way I want it to be.



"I like it when you bruise me, but I like it better when you make me bleed..."

Sitting on the cold floor, holding back tears with all my energy. I wish this would end; I wish I could sleep. I can't tell anyone, and when I try, they tell me to stop this bullshit. They are only thoughts. I haven't hurt myself since July and nobody even fucking noticed. They only care when I am slicing myself up. I lost more friends when I stopped than I have now. A few people try to understand, more are just angry or repelled. I try to make things better by depriving myself of what gives life. I sit and stare at the wall from the enormous lack of energy it causes, and my mind goes blank. Such a wonderful feeling, to be hungry. When I am full I feel sick. I feel weighed down and bloated, like a corpse. The cold that fills my body and swarms across my skin draws attention away from the things in my head. I forget what hurts inside when the outside is in pain. Sometimes I wonder what it would feel like to have a brick thrown against my rib cage; to hear the crack and feel a stabbing twinge with every breath. I'd rather have someone near to comfort me. To make things better even though I am supposed to do this on my own. I'm not reliant on other people, but I wish someone was here to make me promise not to split my arm from wrist to elbow and watch the insides spill onto the floor; to tell me to eat; to make me take care of myself, because I don't have the desire to do this for me. I want someone here to tell me that things aren't that bad and that I need to calm down, to look at things in the right perspective. I need someone to remind me that everything will be alright and that the world isn't such a horrible place, and that there are a few good people out there. I don't want to waste my time with all this bullshit. I want to lay back down on solid ground and bleed the life from my veins some days, but everything will be alright. Things aren't that bad.

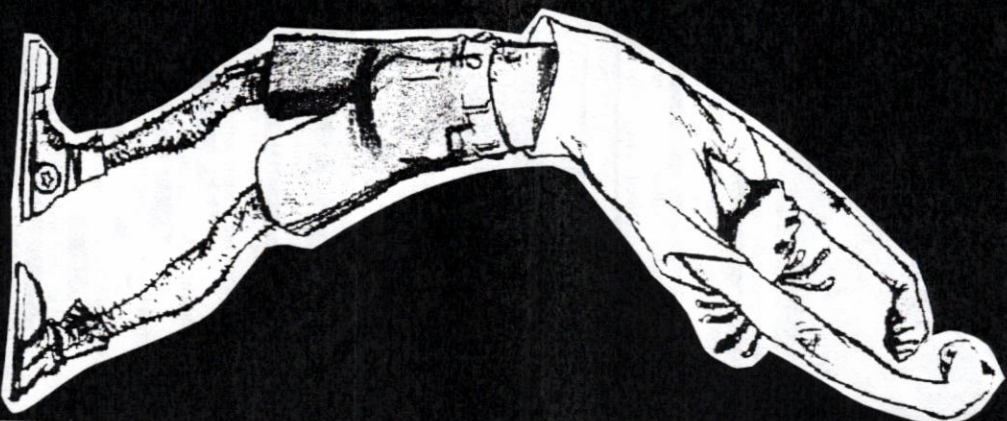


# Charles

# Romualotti

Alexandra: How long have you been writing? How did you get started?

Charles Romualotti: I started writing when I was really young, like fifth grade. A teacher found out that I was writing stories in my spare time so he offered me extra credit for every finished work I presented. Then I got into the punk rock thing, and dedicated my time to music. Writing took a backseat to that until I turned 22. I had worked on some other ideas, mostly dark, not-ish type of fiction in a somewhat Victorian atmosphere, but never felt all that connected to what I was writing. At 23, I came up with an idea for a story that was very different from what I had been working on. This was *Salad Days*. I spent seven years working on it until the time of completion. The original draft of *Salad Days* was 700 pages long, so you can see that the editing took some time! In what to do with it at that point, I didn't want to lose too much control. So I decided on the route of self-publishing, but some "how to" books, got a second full-time job, worked 80 hours a week with no days off for nine months, and put it out myself. It's been extremely successful, too. It raised enough money not only for three prints in one year of it, but also mostly paid for Rash's printing as well. Rash, though it's still new, is doing well. Currently, I'm nearing the completion to the follow-up of Rash, a book called *Talon*. It's coming together very well and at this point, it will give Rash a run for its money in dark suspense and overall quality.



a

I'm quite convinced that this is perfection, at least as close as I can come to it. The cool night air and the moisture on your face and hands. Screaming the word to a song in the crowd until they're canon, taken like a snapshot in a snowstorm. Waking up in a city you don't know, surrounded with friends, with the sun long since risen. And you always know it's more meaningful if you're still awake from the night before.

## Soundtrack

You know us. We're the ones who always show up early and leave late, the ones who dance every time they leave a get hurt, the ones who are broke every time machine, that is a show, to come home with a little time machine, that is a soundtrack for a friend, for a conversation on a curb with someone new from far away, for a laugh, for a look, for a glance, for how you felt about him, for how you wish you didn't feel about her, and for it all, for a night.

for

Evenings full of laughter, of songs sung too loud, too often, quiet down, stay in control but you can't, or won't and that's the same. The lack of control that comes in electric summers, hot cities and in the middle, you know the kids who go to every show, even if you've never been to the town, or seen the kids. You know the ones who dance and don't care, who can't care. Because tomorrow it's job and school and girls or boys, it's jerks and money and problems, but know it can and always will be just what it is, what it's always been. Laughter and sound, hugs and handshakes, lasting friendships built on one night.





We strolled down the street, the brilliant orange sky quickly turning shades of blue and purple above us, completely unaware of the people gawking in mock horror at our appearances. I wasn't until a woman walked by me, her shoulder slamming intentionally into mine, that I was aware anyone else was even on the street. I glared at her as she tried to keep her eyes on mine. After a few seconds, she looked at her feet and hurried away in the opposite direction. "Asshole..." Spoon growled, his face flushed with anger. "It doesn't matter, really. I'm fine." I whispered, pulling him across the street to avoid a police officer that was walking towards us, looking grim. We walked around a corner and down a few streets, into a decent looking neighborhood, despite several boarded up houses at one corner. The sky was now a

deep shade of navy. Spoon looked around to make sure no one was watching as I climbed up the deteriorating wooden steps behind the house and lifted myself carefully through a broken window next to the locked door. Spoon joined me shortly, as I brushed small fragments of glass from my hands and knees. A small trickle of blood ran down my leg and pooled in my worn shoes.

We returned home that night with a new houseguest, former resident of the modest squat we had gone calling to. Justin was a kid from back home, two years older than me, skinny, tall, and slightly insane. During the days he lived at the Pirate House, in the small room directly below ours, he caused more trouble than the rest of the residents put together, which is really saying something considering we were all rebellious punks and law-hating anarchists. On his second night at the house, he poured gasoline on the front lawn and set it ablaze, all the while shouting obscenities and jumping along the sidewalk. When we asked him what his malfunction was the next morning, he just shrugged and mentioned the potential for prime mud wrestling territory our yard now held. A few days later, after robbing a liquor store wearing only a Ronald Reagan mask, he climbed up on the roof in a drunken stupor to "get a better look at the neighborhood" and stumbled off the edge, landing in the branches of a tree that only reached as high as the second floor, breaking both his legs. The neighbors called the cops, who placed Justin in the same minimum-security mental facility that Wednesday resided in. I bet those two became great friends. Maybe they deserved each other.

Pounding echoed through the house, getting louder as every second passed. Spoon grabbed my hand and pulled me off our mattress, holding me close as he whispered in my ear. I was still half asleep and couldn't get my eyes to focus on the room around me. I suppose it was too dark anyway. I tried to pay attention to Spoon but all I could think about was going back to sleep. "...Shutting us down. They're going to arrest everyone..." I looked towards the door and saw a beam of light creep between the gap near the floor. Spoon froze and held his hand over my mouth. The light passed and everything was dark again. "Come on," he whispered, quieter than before, pushing me ahead of him and out the already open window onto the rusty fire escape. The cool night air swirled around me and brought my senses back. As we crept quietly down the metal stairs I heard people shouting, doors slamming. I could see the red and blue lights reflecting off our mud puddle of a lawn and nearby buildings. As we reached the earth Spoon took my hand again and we sprinted across the cold ground, cutting a path through the misty air, far away from our former home, towards something new. After we found the safety of some sparse trees, I looked back. I could almost make out faces as I watched depraved animals struggling to get two of our former housemates into their shiny white car.

As we walked the long stretch of damp pavement that is Commercial Drive that night, past the liquor store and several other run down businesses, listening to the stillness of the city and the far off sirens, everything seemed right in our small part of the world. Although I had no place to sleep, no money, no food, I did have my freedom and my everything. Spoon, to keep me company and to keep me safe, however long it would end up lasting.

Alex: I'm glad to hear you're working on a new book. Can you tell us anything about it? Talon is a character from Rash, correct?

Charles: Yeah, Talon is in Rash, in fact the story ties up an intentional loose end most people rarely notice, and need not focus on to enjoy the book. It doesn't affect the story of Rash at all and is very insignificant, but upon reading Talon, it makes sense as a whole. Talon is an extension of Rash, featuring more than one character from the original, but it also will stand on its own in that you could start with either book and the other will simply fill in some details. The story of Talon works really well, it's very tense and quick-paced. There are some new characters that will likely steal the show from the ones already established. I'm having a great time writing it, I anticipate that it will be available sometime early this summer.

Alex: Are you going to publish Talon yourself, as you did with the other books?

Charles: I will likely publish Talon myself. As with future efforts after Talon, I may try to get a literary agent and go that route. We'll see, I'll know more when the time comes.

Alex: Have you, or are you considering, publishing any other author's works?

Charles: Actually, yes, I've been approached by another writer who has a GREAT story. One from personal experience. The writer is a girl named Harvest Moon, and the book is called Mental. I hope to be able to do it, but again, it all depends on the income at the time. Ideally, I'd release it with Talon, roughly next summer/fall.

Alex: How do you come up with ideas for what you write?

Charles: The ideas stem from various sources. I thought about Salad Days, but other ideas I've had just come. Sometimes they're quick, but usually they stew in my head for some time!

Alex: Are you doing any writing other than Talon currently?

Charles: No, I've never written or even tried to write anything but novels. I've never submitted any writing to any zine or paper or anything like that. Never went to college, so I've never really even written a paper of any length. The books I do write for myself. When I'm finished, I let others in on it! I try to write the types of books I would personally find interesting.

Alex: What is a typical day like in your life?





Charles: I go to my job when I get up, I have no specific times to be at work, just when I arrive. I am a GIS coordinator for a marketing research firm. I work in traffic analysis. Our goal is to document travel patterns and habits for cities so they can better understand where to improve roads. So I spend my eight hours at work, go to the gym (or swimming, depending on the season), go home and eat, hang out with my girlfriend until about 1am, then I start writing. I'll do that for a few hours, go to bed, and start it all over again.

Alex: What is your favorite band?

Charles: Of all time, it's actually the Smiths! It depends on the genre, though. In punk, I love Descendents, Black Flag, Bad Brains, Dead Kennedys, Minor Threat.

Alex: Do you remember the first concert you ever went to?

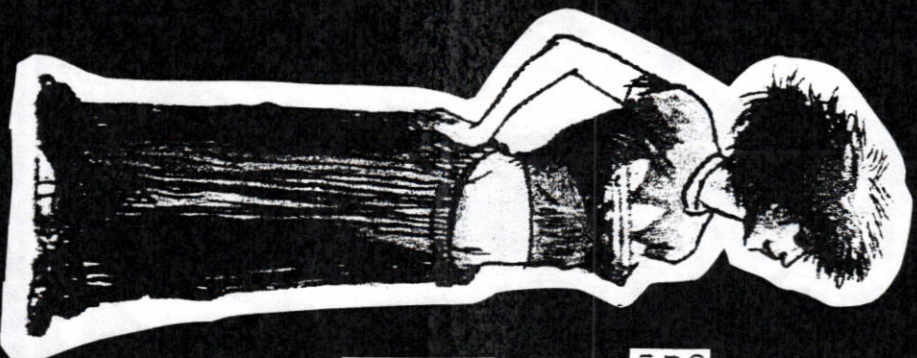
Charles: It's exactly as it was in Salad Days, actually! Black Flag in Lawrence, Kansas. Blew my mind. That was in 1986, a few years back.

Alex: Are a lot of the events in Salad Days taken from your life?

Charles: Almost entirely. Of course it was all fictionalized, but yes it all pretty much happened to a certain degree.

Alex: Have you come back to Kansas to visit since you moved to Austin? What did you think of growing up here, and what do you think of it now?

Charles: I come back at least once a year. My brother lives in Wichita, my parents live in Topeka. I like Kansas quite a bit actually. I will always love Lawrence. I spend roughly 1-2 weeks at X-Mas in KS, some of it in Wichita, some of it in Topeka/Lawrence/KC.



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Stumbling off the midnight Greyhound, freshly arrived in Vancouver and never having set foot in British Columbia before, Spoon and I were extremely overwhelmed and lost. I was feeling particularly sloshed from the blur of our three day journey. Spoon was a little better off than I, being a tough punk rock boy and all, and therefore carried me in his arms to a bus station bench where we would sit and assess the situation.

After crashing on the bench and waking at 4AM to the freezing chill of the harsh Canadian air, Spoon grabbed my hand, pulled me to my feet, and we trudged through the darkened streets until we reached Commercial Drive, where I collapsed on the cold pavement in front of a liquor store.

"Is she gonna be alright?" a deep, harsh voice echoed in my ears, into the dream of empty space and nothingness that surrounded me. "Yeah... I think so..." Spoon's voice echoed in response. I could feel crusty-over blood on my forehead, but the pain wasn't there. Confused, I drifted off into another delirious dream, voices echoing, rushing, fading in my head.

A day later I woke, shaking like nothing else with the worst headache known to human kind, to find a boy named Wednesday sitting on my mattress. I stared at him confused for a moment and then tried to speak, but it felt as if my throat was missing. "Nice, isn't it?" the boy spoke. I stared at him in horror. He frowned a little. "Wearing off, is it? Want more? Of course you do..." he whispered as he stood to lock the door but found it had been broken upon forced entry in the past. After sitting back down he reached into his pocket and pulled out a dirty syringe and a bag of equally dirty looking powder. I tried to move but nothing was voluntary, just jerky and painful. "Stop that. You'll only make things worse. You're just coming down. Don't worry. I'll fix it for you. Just give me a second." As he reached for his lighter, Spoon walked into the room with another boy, whom I had never met. What followed was the biggest explosion I had ever witnessed, all words and limbs flying. Wednesday was thrown out of the room and tumbled down the stairs, landing in a pile on the wooden floor below, while Spoon and the other boy pulled me off the bed and onto my feet, my body still trembling, and half carried, half walked me out of the house, the nameless boy making it a point of kicking the heap at the bottom of the stairs in the mouth with a steel-toed combat boot before exiting, leaving a trail of blood across the floor. Later I learned that Wednesday was a junkie who had kindly offered to let us stay with him in his apartment in Victory Heights, and had been injecting me with one drug or another every chance he got. We figured that he was hoping to "better his life" by becoming a dealer, but after we left he was taken to the hospital for head trauma, arrested in connection with a robbery that had taken place earlier that week, and spent the rest of his days in a minimum-security mental facility. Spoon felt horribly guilty for everything; thought it was all his fault, but after much coaxing he realized it wasn't. And anyway, or experience wasn't all bad. It taught us a very important lesson. And just what was the important lesson this little encounter taught us? Never trust a junkie. Never.

Later that day Spoon and I were all set up in a nice little room on the fourth floor of the Pirate House. The bathroom was down the hall, someone was always cooking something good downstairs, and in the room next to ours lived Neal, the nameless boy from the heroic rescue/train damage scene. Neal was a veteran of the punk scene, maybe twenty-three or twenty-four. He was faded as anything and liked to let people know how little he thought they knew. I think that's why people liked him so much. Neal was never short of a girlfriend or adoring fans to help him cause a scene, and loved conflict even more than he loved sex. He had been living with a girl named Zelda for a few years, in which time she had severed all ties with her family, become a vegetarian, started a band, been arrested for arson three times, learned how to scam health food stores to get free grub, spent awhile in a mental hospital after jumping off of a moving bus and landing in the middle of the street in rush hour traffic, picked herself up with alcohol, and failed at an attempt to rob a convenience store with a water pistol and a friend from high school. All this and she was only seventeen. We became friends right away and spent a lot of time trading war stories. She always won with most gruesome, disgusting, or tragic tales. I preferred to keep my own tragedies and downfalls a little quieter. I think to this day Spoon is the only person that knows them all.



## Stuck in the Sky

I lay in my warm bed on the second floor of our dilapidated house. The boy whom I shared my room with, Spoon, was down the hall watching a pirated anarchist news show some of our friends produced in a nearby squat, much like the one we currently occupied. How they managed to get all the right equipment to make an actual television show was beyond me, but I didn't really care. Their broadcast fuzzed out a few major network channels for a couple miles around while on air each night and we all found it very amusing. In the dim light from a street lamp nearby, I absent-mindedly examined my arms as I listened to the echoing voice from the television bouncing off the walls, down the hall: "Revolution... forgetting what the masses stand for and standing for ourselves... unity through poverty..." I smirked, recognizing the voice, as my focus shifted more intensely towards my body. Several deep scars lined the wrist of my right arm; faded scars from matches, cigarettes, pale stripes of deformed skin, and what had been, for a period of time close to a year, what I considered the most beautiful thing about myself ("...nobody is going to save us...")

Memories flashed in my mind, dim and comforting ("...changes must be made..."). My hands searched pockets, and discovered the thin iron rod placed carefully within my clothing earlier, when the first tremble of pain floated through my soul that day ("...the time is now, we must stand together..."). I raised the shaft and brought it down with a fury on my right arm, on a patch of ivory skin, which had somehow remained scar free thus far. Seven times, equally harsh, and a sharp crack sent me back to reality ("...nothing will stop the revolution!"). Blue and purple blotches surfaced on my now red, quickly swelling skin. I heard fast footsteps in the hallway, the crackling of the television, and my door swung open, creaking and wobbling on its rusted hinges. Two striking hazel eyes fell on the destruction I had caused, and filled with worried tears.

Spoon slunk over to the bed. Defeated, he climbed under the covers with me and wrapped his tattooed arms around my shoulders. I felt him quiver as we sat in the awkward silence that can only exist when someone is trying very hard to maintain a state of calm and sanity in a situation that has pushed them to every emotional limit they have ever known. I tried to catch his gaze, but he wouldn't look at me. The click of someone turning off the television down the hall seemed the shake the deathly stillness of the room. I felt worse than ever before, the growing pain in my arm being dulled to non-existence by guilt that made my insides churn. I had not meant to hurt him, only myself.

I felt his breathing slow and his body began to relax. "We need to leave," He said, decidedly, a slight scratch in his voice, a low, comforting growl. "This place isn't good for you. I know what you need. I know you...you're just like me." Spoon was right, with one minor exception. He was a lot tougher than me, so even when a situation got him down, he managed to survive. I, on the other hand, would crumble into his arms and let him lead the way to safety when life gave me a raw deal.

We sat, in damp clothes and low spirits, staring across the busy street before us. In my hands were all my possessions, easily grasped within the protection of my slender fingers. Spoon searched his pockets and his brain for what would decide our future, as I looked in wonder at passersby, all apparently on their way to another day of work, with umbrellas and jackets and all sorts of things for in-climate weather that my everything and I were currently lacking. I narrowed my eyes as a woman nearly tripped over me, not allowing herself to see the vagrants sitting on the curb. She muttered something about uneven sidewalks and walked away, umbrella in hand.

The Pirate House was a run-down Victorian style squat in East Van, overflowing with all manner of down and out human specimen of the punk rock persuasion. How Spoon and I ended up sleeping on a stained mattress in one of the drafty upper rooms was really just coincidence and some kind of twisted luck. You know, the kind of luck that leaves you with a throbbing sore on your forehead and those weird sickness nightmares.

# BUNTER

## WHO SPITS PAINT

Bunter was started by Ronnie of Shake Gently and Matt from Jillian, and has over the past few months formed an alliance with many local bands. Nowhere Fast, And Academy, Hanoi Chevrolet, and No Tomorrow are a few of the bands that have joined thus far, and I have been told that any other local band that wishes to be a part of it can join. The goal of Bunter is to put on as many all age shows as possible and promote the music local scene in general, which is

always a good thing. However I disagree with those that claim that until this came along the scene was all but dead. There were always kids out there doing something to keep it going, even if everyone wasn't aware. I know of many bands that have tried their hardest to continue putting on shows without a group to help them even when kids stopped coming in droves and venues gave them trouble. Hopefully Bunter will help people keep things going, as well as inspire other

kids to start something on their own and to help things grow, rather than divide people (since we all know we can argue well on our own). If you would like to see the full list of bands on Bunter, would like to join, or have any further questions, go to their site:

<http://bunterwhospitspaint.tripod.com/>



# and academy

**Alexandra:** Who are the members of And Academy, what do you play, and how did you get together to form a band?

**Les:** Here is the current And Academy lineup: Les Easterby- guitar, vocals. Charles Ryan Law- guitar, vocals. Ryan R. - keyboards, vocoder. Mike Murphy- bass, piano. Brian Armitage- drums, banjo. And Academy has gone through 4 different phases. We are most delighted with how things are now. We all met one way or another from a rehearsal space that our various bands shared downtown. We just ended up playing together from there and it has been fabulous.

**Alex:** When initially did the band form?

**Les:** I guess this could probably go back to 1997 when I was playing with a band called Madison. I was playing with my friends Adam Phillips and Chad Duncan. Madison was more of a rock band. We changed the name to And Academy and started doing music differently. That was the original And Academy. We started using the name late 1998 / early 1999

**Alex:** How has your music changed throughout And Academy's four phases?

**Les:** Phase one (1998-1999): Adam Phillips- guitar, vocals. Chad Duncan- drums. Les Easterby- bass, vocals, keyboards. We were doing more straight up emo stuff and were starting to get into math rock. At the same time, I was playing in a band called Split Last Pristine with my friends Ryan Law and Kyle Divine. Kyle ended up moving to California and Ryan joined And Academy. Phase two (1999-2000): Adam- guitar, vocals. Chad- drums, drum machine. Les- guitar, vocals, keyboards. Ryan- bass, vocals. As a group, we started getting into a lot of bands from Chicago and that started to rub off on us. Things were becoming more experimental. We put out a 7" record and shortly after Adam started going to school in Minneapolis and Chad had other things he wanted to pursue. Phase three (2000): Les- guitar, vocals, keyboards, drum machine. Ryan- guitar, vocals, bass, keyboards. We had a tour planned out for And Academy. Since Adam and Chad left, we were forced to do the tour as a duo. We threw a few songs together and reworked previous songs in about 2 weeks before the tour. We wrote more songs that were mainly some 80's sounding electronic pop. A European label called Synthetic Music (which was internet based) put out an EP for us and they later went out of business. Around this time, Brian Armitage's old band Ninja School broke up and we started playing together. Phase four (2001-current): After 3 or 4 fill-in bassists and members switching around, we now have the greatest line up ever. We have 20-25 new songs, most of them are recorded but we have yet to release them.

**Alex:** How would you describe the sound of your music now?

**Les:** It's a beautiful orchestrated sound where everything just melts together. It's really catchy yet very unconventional. I can't explain it well, I just like to call it pop music.

**Alex:** What is the process you go through as a group when you are writing a new song? Does each member focus on specific aspects of the composing or is it done together?

## Bridge To the Future By Justin Zarba

The extensive system of cables used to suspend the Golden Gate Bridge swayed heavily from the strong wind. As the tiny cars went about their business along the road, the balance of good and evil was in jeopardy underneath. Two men were suspended from a series of ropes and pulleys underneath the bridge, teetering on death as the wind fought to tear them loose and cast them into the jagged rocks below.

"You're crazy, Doctor!" declared one of the men as he tugged on certain ropes to swing him closer to the other man. "You have no idea what this experiment will create!" "LIFE!" screamed the other man, the doctor. It was as if he was screaming it to the world, even though his voice was drowned out by the howling wind and the monotonous thrum of the cars above.

"You're not thinking of the repercussions!" the other man yelled, still pulling himself closer to the doctor. His movement was slow, he knew he wouldn't get to the Doctor before he carried out his fiendish plot.

"YOU'RE! the one not thinking!" The Doctor began pulling himself up the ropes towards a small mechanical box. The color alone revealed that this box was not originally a part of the Golden Gate Bridge. Although it was crudely attached, it still had an air of revolutionary technology. "This experiment will change the way we think about massive suspension bridges!"

At that, the doctor had reached the small box. Reaching into his pocket, he carefully took a small computer chip and brought it to the contraption. The wind tried viciously to suck the chip from the Doctor's hand, but his determination proved stronger. The chip was drawing closer and closer to the slot in the box provided for it.

One side was safely in the provided slot, all the Doctor had to do was press the other side into the slot and the information would be secure in the box. The other man had made significant progress in reaching the Doctor, but the wind finally succeeded in its battle and tore him loose of the ropes. The Doctor heard his screams and looked down just in time to see his opponent splash into the water and blood splatter on the occasional jagged rock protruding up, like accusing fingers thrusting their blame towards the bridge.

The Doctor finished his mission and the chip was secure. The information spilled from the chip into the machine and the entire bridge began to shake. The Doctor, unable to fight both the wind and the bridge was torn loose and cast down to his death.

Cars began to careen out of control as the bridge rocked violently, as if in possession of its own personal earthquake. The Golden Gate Bridge then tore itself loose from the road holding it down on both sides. As the two ends of the Bridge curled up, the massive metal infrastructure securing it to the ground began to rip itself free. As cars and trucks alike were jostled around, the Golden Gate Bridge then tore itself completely away from all of its restraints and began to move.

The beams holding it to the ground began to bend and walk and before long the whole bridge was running like a gigantic twenty-two legged metal horse that looked more like a bridge. The police was quickly dispatched and sealed off the city, ramming cars off the road while killing all witnesses brutally and with extreme sadism.

"BWA-HA-HA," echoed the maniacal laugh of the Golden Gate Bridge as it sprinted around the city, crushing buildings and ruining the roads.



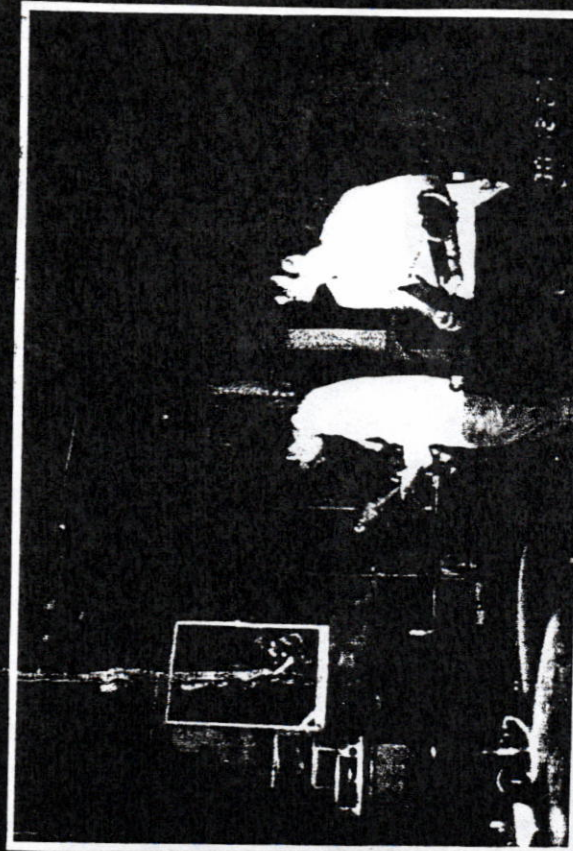
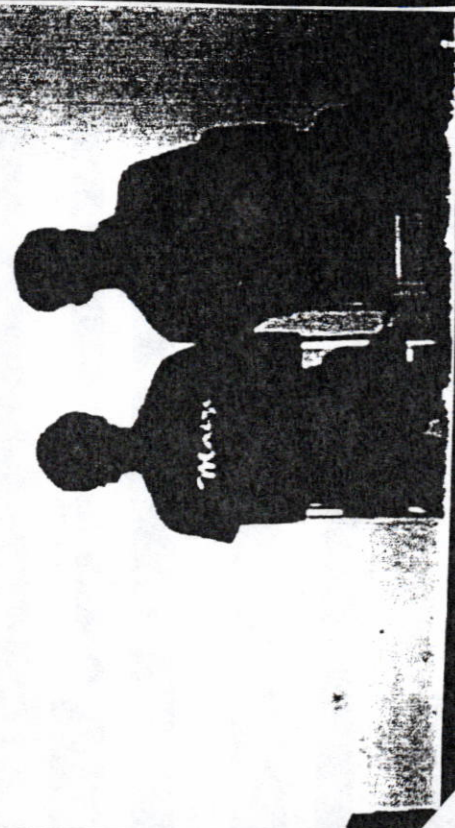
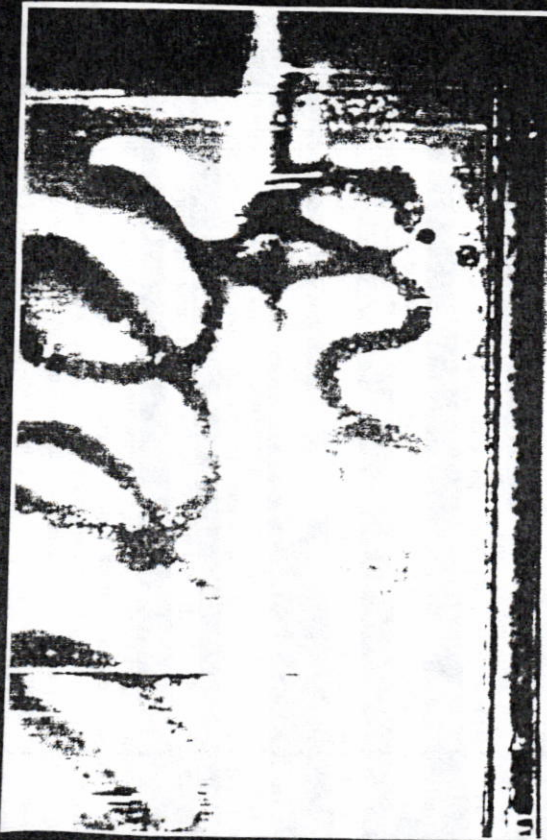
Les: We will be playing at Kirby's Beer Store (17th & Hillside) on January 26th, and we will most likely have something at Lee Shoney in February.

Alex: Do you have any plans to release an album of your new songs anytime soon?

Les: Aside from our friends, we haven't really showed the new recordings to anyone yet. Soon we will be putting together a CD-R with a few songs on it. We'll probably have it at the next show. We'll be sending that to a few labels until we find someone who can assist us in releasing it properly.

Alex: Where can potential fans get a hold of your music?

Les: For now, people can come to a show, or write to [thunderkx@hotmail.com](mailto:thunderkx@hotmail.com), or write to 4444 S. West St. #50, Wichita, KS, 67217.



Les: It's a little bit of both. Ryan and I live together, so we tend to write a lot of songs together whether it's for this band or not. One of us usually has an idea and we present it to everyone and it evolves from there, but there are also some songs that just happen when we practice.

Alex: What personally do you feel you put into your music? When I see you performing it looks like you are really into it, so it must mean a lot to you...

Les: I just try to make the best songs that I can. I love these guys and I feel so blessed to be able to play with them and create such beautiful music.

Alex: How often do you practice? It seems that to get the timing down so well on your songs, going from what seems like complete chaos at some points to each instrument and element fitting together so beautifully at others, you'd either have to spend a lot of time going over it, or have such group chemistry that it would just work.

Les: We try to practice at least once a week. We don't have a set schedule, it's just whenever it works out for all of us. As far as everything fitting together, we know what we want and everything just works that way. We've also learned to improvise a lot. Some songs will change every time.

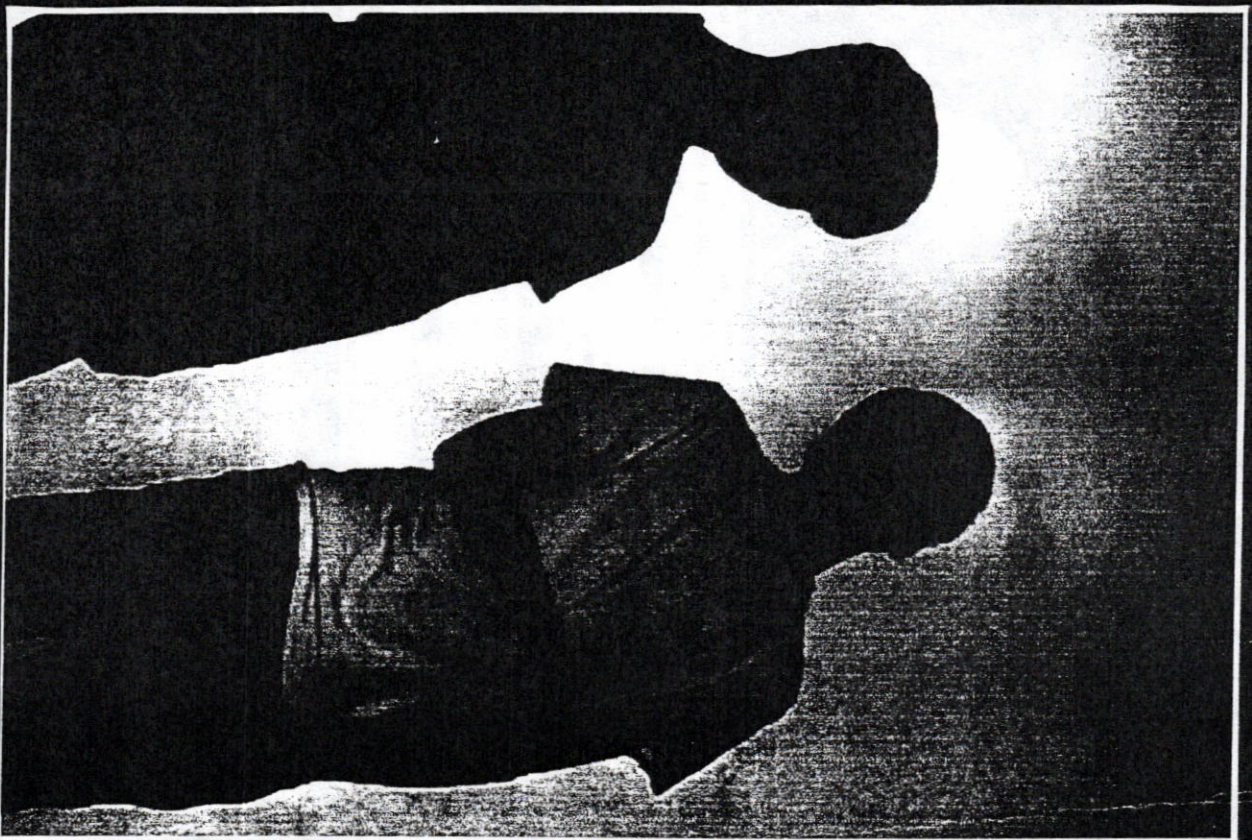
Alex: What is it you hope to get out of being in this band, in your personal or professional life?

Les: First, I'm just happy hanging out and being friends with the people I'm playing with. I'll play music until I'm dead. Sure, it would be nice to get rich and have 15 cars and 5 houses but I don't see that happening. It would be nice to have a solid record label that would put stuff out for us, it's kind of a pain after a while doing it on our own.

Alex: Are there any songs And Academy plays that you enjoy more than the others? What are your favorite songs to perform, or your favorite songs in general, and why do you enjoy them?

Les: I'm not sure about this one. I think everyone has certain songs they may enjoy playing more, but I don't know. I enjoy them all.





Alex: This isn't really dealing with your music, but rather the show on the 5<sup>th</sup>. What was the name of that movie that was playing in the background during your set, and why did you choose to play it? I only caught pieces of it... some guy shooting himself in the head and then walking away, a talking hand... it looked pretty awesome.

Les: It is a French film called "Le Sang D'un Poète" (Blood of a Poet) by Jean Cocteau. It's from 1930 and is one of the first films to explore the idea of existentialism and to use avant-garde filming techniques. It just seemed appropriate to play it at the show. I'm into a lot of films by John Waters, Jean-Luc Godard, David Cronenberg, amongst others. Ryan and I have been working on some short films that we will eventually release as a compilation.

Alex: Would you care to give any details away as far as what the short films you are Ryan are working on are about?

Les: I'd rather wait until we are closer to finishing the project before I let out too many details. We do have 2 films that are pretty much done. The first one is called "Il Anorexie Psycho Crack Prostituée". We are just finishing up the sound; it will probably be finished in a couple days. If anyone wants to come over, we'll probably show it to them. The next one is called "who's in 'or you'". We will be sending it out to get the film processed soon. We are also working on a third film about football, which we know absolutely nothing about.

Alex: Do you have any idea when you will release this short film compilation?

Les: We are still in pre-production right now and we have a lot of other projects to finish as well (music, etc.). Maybe we'll have something by summer, but I don't know yet, it's a little early.

Alex: How will people be able to get a copy of this?

Les: For now, if anyone comes to our house, we'll probably show them what we have.

Alex: When you are getting ready to play at a concert, what goes through your head?

Les: I'm usually impatient and want to play right away. I just pace around and do miscellaneous things like sit in an old truck in an abandoned parking lot and drink stale wine out of a rusty soup can.

Alex: How do you feel when you are actually performing?

Les: I feel just about every emotion possible throughout the entire performance. Playing shows is weird. I'm usually in a trance and can't speak right and talk jibberish.

Alex: What would be an ideal concert for you, either with your band playing, or a show you would like to attend?

Les: I would like to see a show with My Bloody Valentine, The Beach Boys (1966-1968), Sonic Youth, New Order, and every band that came out of Cap'n Jazz (Joan of Arc, Ghosts and Vodka, The Promise Ring, American Football, Owls, etc.).

Alex: Les, I know you play the drums in Jilfian. Do any other members of And Academy play in different bands?

Les: We all have different projects that we're working on whether it is music, art, film, or whatever. Some of us were playing in a band called "Brinelow" (i.p.), some of us are doing solo stuff, there are so many different side bands going on. We also have a collective of friends and we play together, some of the stuff is known as "Brand New Radio".

Alex: Do you have any shows coming up?